Medicaid Mental Health Managed Care Transition

The Idaho Medicaid program was directed by the 2011 Legislature to develop a managed care program for mental health services. Over 35 other states utilize managed care administration for their mental health programs to improve quality, ensure access for enrollees, and maximize the cost-effectiveness of taxpayer dollars being spent for Medicaid mental health services.

Idaho is unique with its small population, rural nature and geographic diversity. Because Idaho is vastly different than many other states, Idaho Medicaid issued a **Request for Information (RFI)** in May 2011 to ascertain whether managed care organizations would be interested in a single, statewide contract for Medicaid mental health services.

The response from the managed care industry was very encouraging. With this positive feedback, Idaho Medicaid has begun the process to define the specifics of a contract proposal, commonly called a Request for Proposal, or RFP. The mental health managed care RFP will provide the contract requirements for the main elements, which include:

- 1. **Participant Assessment and Eligibility**--What is the best way to assess needs and determine mental health program eligibility?
- 2. **Benefits--**What services must be included? Can you describe other types of services you feel would enhance the benefit package?
- 3. **Provider Qualifications and System Delivery Standards**--Who should be able to provide services and what standards should be established?
- 4. **Quality Assurance**--What data should the managed care entity provide regarding outcomes?
- 5. **Local Community Engagement**--How should the managed care entity work with local communities to address conflicts, complaints and obtain feedback?

Developing a mental health managed care program is a statewide effort of Medicaid staff, mental health and medical providers, community partners, participants and families. Idaho Medicaid held a statewide meeting of these stakeholders to gather specific recommendations and priorities for the main requirements for an RFP on August 30, 2011. Over 75 people participated in the meeting, which was video-conferenced at 10 sites throughout the state. This stakeholder input is being used to develop the RFP, which the state intends to release in August 2012.

A panel of stakeholders presented ideas on development of an RFP for a mental health managed care system. Members of the panel presented powerpoint presentations, which are available by clicking the name of each stakeholder.

- Dr. John Hanks, D.O., Pediatrician
- Kathie Garrett, Regional Director for West NAMI-Idaho
- Jeff Wright, President of the Idaho Mental Health Providers Association
- Martha Ekhoff, Office of Consumer Affairs
- Teresa Wolf, Chair of the State Mental Health Planning Council